

Remarks

Claims 1-12 remain pending in the application, with Claims 1, 2, 4, and 10-12 being independent. Claims 1-12 have been amended herein to improve their form and to change certain dependencies. These changes are not believed to affect the scope of the claims.

Response to Election of Species Requirement

Applicants respectfully traverse the election of species requirement set forth in the Office Action mailed January 13, 2005.

A careful review of the specification reveals that the various species are closely related and would not require separate fields of search. Accordingly, neither Applicants nor the Patent and Trademark Office should be put to the trouble and expense entailed in multiple filing and prosecution. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the public at large should not be required to obtain and study separate patent documents in order to have available all of the issued patent claims covering the invention.

Nevertheless, in order to comply with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.143, Applicants provisionally elect Species I, represented by Figs. 6A-6D. It is respectfully submitted that at least Claims 1, 6, 9 and 10 read on the elected species. In addition, Claim 7 has been amended to depend from Claim 1 and Claim 8 depends from Claim 7. While these claims may read on a different species, due to their dependency on Claim 1, they should be rejoined and examined with the elected claims.

Favorable consideration is requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Williamson", written over a horizontal line.

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